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Wyoming's First Lady And Anheuser-Busch Encourage Parents to Talk With Their Children About Not Drinking

CHEYENNE (March 20, 2006) - Wyoming First Lady Nancy Freudenthal and St. Louis, Missouri-based brewer Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc. and its Wyoming distributors have joined forces to encourage dialogue between parents and their children about making safe, responsible decisions. In a letter sent statewide, Mrs. Freudenthal urges parents to take an active role in reducing underage drinking by teaching youth to respect the law and exercise personal responsibility.

The letter is accompanied by information about *Family Talk About Drinking*, a program developed as a community service by Anheuser-Busch, which provides guidelines from parenting and education authorities on how to talk with children about not drinking. The information is being mailed this month to more than 15,500 Wyoming households with children between the ages of 8 and 17.

"Prom and graduation season is around the corner. These important milestones in our children's lives are a perfect time for Wyoming's parents to talk with their children about how to celebrate responsibly—and that means *not* drinking," stated Freudenthal. "And while parents want to make these celebrations special for our youth, it is equally important that they understand that it is not only against the law, but that it is also wrong, to provide alcohol to teens at these kinds of parties," she added. "I commend Anheuser-Busch for their leadership and support in reducing childhood drinking, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to join with the company in communicating such an important public health message to parents."

Mrs. Freudenthal's initiative comes on the heels of a recent statewide survey that indicates that the behavior of Wyoming youth is heading in the right direction. Fewer are "binge drinking" (32 percent in 2005 versus 35 percent in 2003) or "riding in a car with someone who's been drinking," (37 percent in 2005 versus 40 percent in 2003) according to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and conducted biannually.

Research also shows that parents have the power to help their children do the right thing: 74 percent of 8 to 17 year-olds identify their parents as the No. 1 influence in their decision to drink or refrain from drinking when they're underage, according to the Roper Youth Report, a national survey of teens.

"We are proud to work with the first lady on this important initiative and we applaud her leadership in providing parents with tools they can use to continue helping their children make smart choices," said John Kaestner, vice president of Consumer Affairs for Anheuser-Busch. "Talking with our children about underage drinking isn't always easy, but it's one of the most significant discussions parents can ever have with their children. It's also important that we remind parents and other adults at this time of year not to buy alcohol for minors or provide it to them at parties."

The mailing provides parents with a program brochure, as well as a bookmark and includes a toll-free number and pre-paid postage reply card to order other free *Family Talk* materials. Parents also may visit the first lady's homepage, www.wfli.org for a link to download the parent guides. More than six million pieces of material have been distributed since *Family Talk* was introduced in 1990. Additional resources from these programs for parents can be found at www.familytalkonline.com. Anheuser-Busch assumed all of the development and mailing costs associated with the project.

Nancy Freudenthal started the Wyoming First Lady's Initiative, as a state and local partnership to reduce childhood drinking. She is a co-chair for the nationwide initiative "Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free." The Leadership Initiative is a collaboration of almost 50 current and emeritus spouses of governors working together in a nonpartisan effort to increase public awareness, engage policymakers, and mobilize action to stop childhood drinking. The first lady is also a member of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's Underage Drinking Initiative Steering Committee.

Anheuser-Busch and its 600 wholesalers nationwide have invested more than a half-billion dollars since 1982 in a comprehensive portfolio of more than two dozen community-based programs and national advertising campaigns to promote responsibility and discourage alcohol abuse, including underage drinking and drunk driving. For the third consecutive year, Anheuser-Busch was named the No. 1 U.S. beverage company in social responsibility in *FORTUNE* Magazine's "2006 America's Most Admired Companies" and "2006 Global Most Admired Companies" rankings. More information on Anheuser-Busch's underage-drinking prevention efforts is available at <http://www.beeresponsible.com>.

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